

POLICY ON RESIDENTS PLANTING TREES ON COUNCIL-OWNED LAND

1. Purpose

This policy sets out the principles, process, and conditions under which residents, community groups, and organisations may plant trees on land owned or managed by Frodsham Town Council (“the Council”).

The Council supports appropriate tree planting to:

- Enhance biodiversity
- Improve air quality
- Contribute to climate resilience
- Improve the visual amenity of public spaces
- Strengthen community engagement

All planting must be carefully planned to ensure public safety, protect infrastructure, and preserve existing ecological value.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Individual residents
- Community groups
- Schools and voluntary organisations
- Businesses and developers (where applicable)

It covers all land owned or managed by the Council, including parks, open spaces, verges, recreational grounds, and amenity land.

3. General Principles

Tree planting proposals must:

1. Be appropriate to the location.
2. Not obstruct highways, footpaths, sightlines, lighting columns, utilities, or access points.
3. Not negatively impact underground services (water, gas, electricity, telecoms).
4. Not interfere with drainage systems.
5. Be consistent with any existing landscape management plans.
6. Promote native or climate-resilient species suitable for the local environment.
7. Avoid invasive or non-native species known to cause ecological harm.

The Council reserves the right to refuse proposals that are unsuitable, unsafe, or inconsistent with strategic objectives.

4. Application Process

Residents or groups wishing to plant trees must:

1. Submit a written application to the Council including:
 - Proposed location (with map or sketch)
 - Species and number of trees
 - Proposed planting date
 - Long-term maintenance plan
 - Funding arrangements (if applicable)
2. Await written approval before undertaking any planting.

Unauthorised planting on Council land is not permitted and may result in removal of the tree(s).

5. Species Selection

- Native species appropriate to Cheshire and the local soil conditions.
- Species must be appropriate for the available space at maturity.
- Large canopy species will not normally be approved near boundaries, buildings, footpaths, or services.
- Fruit trees may be considered where suitable and where maintenance arrangements are clear.

The Council may provide a recommended species list upon request.

6. Planting Standards

Approved planting must:

- Follow recognised arboricultural best practice.
- Use appropriate staking and guards where necessary.
- Be planted during suitable seasonal conditions.
- Avoid damage to existing turf, tree roots, habitats, or infrastructure.
- The Council does not permit any memorial plaques to be attached to, or near any newly planted tree.

The Council may require planting to be supervised or carried out by qualified contractors.

7. Maintenance and Liability

Unless otherwise agreed in writing:

- The Council retains ownership of trees planted on its land.
- The applicant may be required to maintain the tree(s) for an agreed establishment period (typically 2–3 years).
- The Council retains ultimate responsibility for long-term management, safety inspections, and any necessary pruning or removal.

The Council accepts no liability for unauthorised planting.

8. Removal of Unauthorised Planting

The Council reserves the right to:

- Remove any tree planted without approval.
 - Remove any tree that becomes unsafe, diseased, or unsuitable.
 - Recover reasonable costs where damage to Council land or infrastructure has occurred.
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9. Equality and Environmental Commitment

The Council is committed to:

- Promoting sustainable development
 - Enhancing biodiversity
 - Supporting community-led environmental initiatives
 - Ensuring fair and transparent decision-making
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10. Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if required by legislative or operational changes.

Adopted: 9th March 2026

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Review date: March 2029